

## As Long as Your Gaze Permits

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# As Long as Your Gaze Permits

by [neznaboh](#)

## Summary

That is how you got to this point. You are now at the front of the shop staring openly at the handsome man you took in many months ago. You're not sure when you fell in love with him. It might have been when he told you all the stories of how he got the wounds you were cleaning. It might have been when you watched him play with the village kids and let them touch his scars, unafraid of being the infamous Ghost General. Hell, it might have been just a simple look as he stocked the shelves like right now.

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or, I feed the Wen Ning simps because he deserves so much love.

## Notes

This is based on Yu Bin's song in the Untamed OST so it's more geared toward the tv series plot. Wen Ning is my favorite character in the whole series and also I would marry him (or Yu Bin tbh) on the spot. I hope this reaches the target audience of fellow Wen Ning lovers.

There was a man in a straw hat who continually wandered around your village. You didn't mean to pry really, but he stopped in your shop with a younger man the first time. Then, he was alone. The items he was buying made it seem he would be staying in the area for a while so you inquired about it.

"Where's the young man you were with last time, sir?" Your words startled him, but he smiled up at you.

"My cousin went back home to his studies. Thank you for thinking of us." His smile faded as his eyes followed your gaze to his neck. Quickly, he pulled his outer robe further over his scars.

"Pardon my stare, sir, you've intrigued me. I hope you don't mind me asking if you have a place to stay. I noticed you have been wondering around frequently." You attempted your most sincere smile and he conceded.

"Thank you again for your generous concern. The truth is... a farmer has been letting me sleep in the loft of his barn."

Your eyes snapped open widely. He started to fumble with his things like he'd done something wrong, but you quickly said, "Oh that simply won't do. I have a guest house open now that my mother passed. Please I insist you have a proper bed."

The man in front of you blinked rapidly, visibly confused. "Please, I can't accept such kindness." He quietly added, "And I'm sorry for your loss."

"Please, I insist. You're clearly hungry and injured." You walked to the door to turn the sign to 'closed' and guide the awkward man, who appeared your age, to the back of the store.

"Um... I can not pay for the room."

You smiled at him, knowing he would say that next. "Then you will work with me, here in the shop!"

He had a silly little smile, you couldn't help but admire it. He nodded fervently at the prospect of work and a roof over his head, his hat bouncing along with his hair. He bowed deeply to you and you noticed his cuts and bruises that looked fresh. The markings on his neck could wait, you had work ahead of you.

That is how you got to this point. You are now at the front of the shop staring openly at the handsome man you took in many months ago. You're not sure when you fell in love with him. It might have been when he told you all the stories of how he got the wounds you were cleaning. It might have been when you watched him play with the village kids and let them touch his scars, unafraid of being the infamous Ghost General. It might have been how he said your name excitedly every time he made a sale and would light up when you promised to buy him something with the proceeds. Hell, it might have been just a simple look as he

stocked the shelves like right now.

Wen Ning feels you staring and turns to give you that sweet smile of his. "What are you thinking about?" His face drops to panic, "Is my robe falling? Can you see too much of my demonic marks?"

"Oh no! Wen Qionglin, you're fine! I was just thinking of how we met. It makes me smile to think how far you've come. You look very healthy."

His smile slowly returns. "Mn, you did a great job of nursing me back to health."

He turns back to the shelves before saying, "After we close, I would like to show you what I have been working on."

"Of course!" You exclaim, perhaps a little too excitedly. "I shall prepare us something for dinner." The statement is a bit of a question. Wen Ning has his own place in the guest home and often fends for himself since he is healthy again.

The man across from you nods quickly. "Yes, I-I like it when you cook." It's silly, but it makes you smile dreamily back at him.

That night, a little while after closing, Wen Ning knocks gently on your kitchen door as you are stirring the soup you know he likes.

His hair is brushed neatly into a low ponytail that you've never seen before. It shows his face plainly and your heart skips a beat as you open the door. You take a minute before inviting him in. He fumbles awkwardly with his bangs before you realize you're still standing there in the doorway looking at him.

"Wen-gege, please come in." You cough slightly, realizing how impolitely you were just staring.

His smile says everything he does not. He nods politely and places his bag on the floor near his usual spot at the table.

"Are you hungry? Would you like soup?" Your voice shakes in a way that confuses even you. You've taken care of him for months, seen him half naked to nurse his wounds. But this, he looks overwhelmingly handsome in a new tailored outer robe and, oh, his hair. You swallow away the thoughts of even his eyebrows as you pour the soup in small bowls.

"Thank you," he says delicately taking the spoon as you sit close beside him. You used to have to feed him when his arm injuries were healing, but you never moved the chairs back apart.

"I see you've found good use for the wage we've been able to get for you." You try to make small talk but the energy is palpable between you.

He looks down at the new outer layer, "Ah mn, I am so grateful that things in the shop have

been going well enough for this.”

“I really think it’s because of you. The people love you.” This makes his cheeks color slightly and you touch his wrist. “I mean it, Wen-ge. You’re so kind to everyone, and you know so much about medicinal cooking. It should be me thanking you.”

He fumbles around a bit in the way you’ve gotten used to him doing. He leans over for the bag and pushes his soup to the side.

“Well actually,” Wen Ning starts, but is cut off by his own thoughts in scrambling with the bag. “I have been working on this to show my thanks... to you.”

It’s now your cheeks’ turn to color a deep red and it makes him chuckle a little. “No need to be embarrassed, I mean it. I didn’t know what I would do with my freedom, my new life without Wei-gongzi... until I met you.”

He thought that statement would clear the tension, but it just makes you more nervous. Gods above, you really adore him. Your ears follow your cheeks’ lead as he pulls out a poem to show you.

“I wrote this in the prison about Wei-gongzi after his death, well, because you know he saved me.” You nod, encouraging him on. He’s told you countless stories of his adventures with the Yiling Patriarch. Some of his stories you could hardly believe, but through all of them, you knew he loved the Yiling Patriarch in a way you could never understand.

“I was so intent on spending the rest of my life at his side, at his service as his general.” Wen Ning’s voice gets quieter as he continues, as if to hold in pain.

“But when I saw him with Hanguang-jun and the way they stood by each other after so many years apart, I realized he had that already and...” His voice breaks slightly. “And, well, that I wanted that for myself and that I needed to find it on my own.”

Your hand finds its place back on his wrist, “Wen Ning...”

He looks up at you, slightly startled by the use of his given name. There is no confusion in his eyes, but you find yourself lost in them a bit as he places his hand over yours.

“I created accompaniment for it, and I want to play it for you... if you’d like.” Wen Ning’s voice is soft and his eyes are pleading as you lift your hand away from his.

“Please, I would love nothing more.” You push your soup slightly away so you can pull the poem closer. Wen Ning pulls out a flute decorated in the style of the Gusu Lan sect.

“Wei-gongzi and Zewu-jun taught me to play so that when I’m on my own, without Wei-gongzi or A-Yuan, I can fight back if someone tries to control me.” He says this so plainly you think you might cry. Pushing back the tears, you wave your hands to gesture him to play.

He begins with a soft prelude and then nods to you to start reading along with the music.

Your heart jumps at the words 'so long as your gaze permits it'. You look up at Wen Ning who is deep in concentration. Bad choice, your heart is racing at how striking he looks. He meant the Yiling Patriarch when he wrote it, but is this all meant to say that it's about you now?

You read again. Your mind travels with the music. 'Even if my body is full of demonic marks. I will use the rest of my wretched life to protect you.' The tears are welling in your eyes before you even know it.

You can't read it anymore. Pushing the paper slightly away from you, you watch as this beloved man plays the flute gently in your kitchen. You look slightly past him to the wall, the walls that have seen so many years of you living alone until he came into your life. The house itself, a gift from your parents and their parents before them, has seen generations of scenes like this.

Gazing back at Wen Ning, you memorize the way his fingers graze the flute. His eyelids are gently closed, more bangs falling into his face as he moved in time with the sound. You don't even notice the song end until his eyelids flutter open and his gaze meet yours.

"Did you... did you like it?" His eyes melt your heart. You haven't seen such excitement behind them since the day you offered him shelter.

"Oh Wen Ning, it was beautiful. I didn't know you could play like that." You take the risk and let a hand brush his bangs back from his face.

"But the lyrics," he starts. "Did you feel what I feel for you?" He breaks the question off nervously holding your hand to his face where you linger fumbling with his hair.

"Of course I did, Wen Ning. You'll have to sing it to me one day, but..."

He interrupts you quickly, "I mean it. I will protect you. You've done so much for me, but I care for you for so many reasons beyond that. I could never repay you for finding this feeling, for letting me feel again."

"You're much too sweet, Wen Ning. You don't need to repay me. I did it because I care for you too. I know you'll protect me, but..." Your eyes are fully welled with tears at this point and you bring yourself closer to him. His face is contorted with confused emotions at your words. You want nothing more than to just smooth the wrinkle between his brow forming at the word 'but'.

You bring your other hand up to caress his face. "But, Wen Ning, I have to make a correction to the lyrics." His face relaxes and his eyes widen. You graze your thumb back and forth over his cheek to smooth the frown his face begins to contort into.

"I don't think your life is wretched. After everything you've told me, I still think your life is beautiful, worth celebrating." Your words spark tears in Wen Ning's eyes and he grips your hand tighter. "I can never replace all that you've lost, but I want to celebrate with you all that you have, and have had, and who you've become."

He stumbles to find the right words. "I can't... I can't give you the life you deserve. I don't age, I... I will be like this until someone kills me. All I know how to do is hurt. I can't..."

You let your other hand drop from his face to his neck. You expect the silence and stilling wince that comes when you trace your fingers along the demonic markings. "I am not afraid of this." Your fingers tap the largest scar on his collar bone. "I know who you are beneath them. I know what you went through because of them. You just showed me that you can defend yourself from others trying to control you..."

Before you can say more, you are stopped by his other hand holding your face just as tenderly. He looks to you for approval and wipes the tears from your eyes and from his. You lean into his touch and he leans in to place a gentle kiss on your lips. Your arms are entangled together when you break apart.

"No one has ever talked to me like that since I became this. Thank yo-" You cut him off with another kiss and his face colors.

"Don't thank me, I mean it," you say putting his own words back on him. He laughs so beautifully you think you might die right there.

He leans in for another kiss. When it breaks, you lean in for yet another. The two of you sit at the kitchen table for some time going back and forth like this, the soup all but forgotten.

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